incentivise States to invest and re-orient the current agricultural development strategies. In addition, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for wheat has also been enhanced to Rs. 1,000/- per quintal for Rabi marketing season 2008-09 to encourage the farmers to grow more wheat for Paddy, the MSP has been fixed at Rs.850/- and Rs.880/- per quintal for Common and Grade-A varieties, respectively for kharif marketing season 2008-09 with the similar objectives. Further, while imposing a ban on Wheat and non-Basmati Rice export and permitting Wheat and Rice import at zero duty, the gap between demand and supply is contained.

Discontinuation of import of semen for betterment of the breed of animals

†1255. SHRI ISHWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the import of semen for betterment of the breed of animals has been discontinued; and

(b) if so, from which date and reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Steps for quality crops and protection from weeds

†1256. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:
SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH:
SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that crops grown in farms are found to be wanting in nutritious elements and also whether weeds are detrimental to both the crops and the health;

(b the effective steps being taken by Government for quality crops and protection from weeds; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Plan to increase milk production

1257.DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to launch a National Dairy Plan to increase milk production to reach a level of 160 to 180 million tons by 2021;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether a national conference of State Ministers of Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development was held at New Delhi in the month of September this year;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(d) if so, the details of discussion held in the conference and outcome thereof; and

(e) whether Government is encouraging co-operatives and societies to increase milk production and if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) The National Dairy Plan is at a preliminary stage of formulation.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Issue like improving the productivity of livestock, disease control and prevention, feed and fodder development, strengthening of veterinary and dairy infrastructure and manpower, better utilization of Central assistance and impact of climate change were discussed in the conference. The conference also adopted the National Livestock Policy.

(e) Yes, Sir. Financial assistance in the form of grant is provided to State dairy federations/ district milk unions/dairy cooperative societies under various dairy development schemes.

Impact of global warming on agricultural production

†1258. SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the climate of the country is undergoing a change very rapidly;

(b) whether the climatic change is affecting the agricultural production as well;

(c) if so, what has been the extent of its impact on the production of wheat and rice in particular; and

(d) what measures have so far been taken in order to provide a protection to the crops/production against the adverse effects of such a climatic change?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The increasing average surface air temperature in the country over the past 100 years (1901-2000) were the order of 0.4°C. The frequency of occurrence of extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, higher temperature in winter, etc. in the recent past has also increased.

(b) and (c) No definite evidences of substantial decrease in agricultural production in the country due to climate change, as the process is very slow. However, there are few factual informations reported on decrease in agricultural production in the country due to extreme events like cold waves, heat waves, abnormal temperatures and the excess rainfall. Preliminary simulation studies have indicated significant decline in food grain production due to climate change in future.

(d) During Tenth Plan period ICAR has initiated a Network Project on "Impact, Adaptation and Vulnerability of Indian Agriculture to Climate Change" at different ICAR Institutes/State Agricultural Universities. The Project aimed to study the impact of climate change on agriculture and allied disciplines like bio-diversity, agroforestry, horticulture, livestock and fisheries. Research efforts are being made to mitigate the impacts of climate change by increasing the adaptive capacity of the

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